

## Quick Read

### In General

#### Social events planned

The 229th Adjutant General Corps Ball is at Patrick Henry Village Pavilion, in Heidelberg, Aug. 21, 6 p.m. Info: Capt. Azania Olezene, DSN 364-4695 or azania.olezene@afnorth.usanato.army.mil; The Logistics Ball is Oct. 2, 5 p.m., at Ramstein A.F.B. Officer's Club. Buy tickets by Sept. 8 through your unit's Logistics Ball coordinator.

### Belgium

#### Enjoy cool and sultry jazz

American Red Cross and the SHAPE Jazz Messengers host the "All That Jazz" free outdoor concert Aug. 21, 7:30-9:30 p.m., under the white tent near the GB on SHAPE. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and visit the ice cream stand. Info: Julie Gomez, DSN 423-4008.

#### Fest promises family fun

The Fun For All Fest on SHAPE is Aug. 28. This year's fest promises to be a final celebration of summer, and will take the blues out of returning to classrooms and offices. Info: Antonia Anastasopoulou, DSN 423-4269.

### Netherlands and Germany

#### Open house planned

American Spouses' Club has an open house Aug. 26, 7-9 p.m. in AFNorth School cafeteria, with info about the club and community organizations, refreshments and door prizes too. Info: Melissa Leugers, 046 439-7577.

#### Bazaar announced

American Women of Geilenkirchen host Foggy Fields Bazaar, Nov. 12, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Nov. 13, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Nov. 14, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., in Hangar 4, Geilenkirchen NATO Base. Over 100 booths are filled with Polish pottery, Turkish rugs, crafts, jewelry, chocolate, and more. Open to all NATO and U.S. ID card holders just in time for holiday shopping.

## Ath mourns fallen heroes



Photos on Page 8

# Gas main explodes 20 dead, over 120 burned U.S. personnel aid rescue effort

**U.S. Army military police officers, Army National Guard force protection Soldiers, U.S. Air Force firemen help Belgian emergency workers with man-made catastrophe**

By Rick Haverinen

Military police patrolman were changing shifts outside the provost marshal's office on Chièvres Air Base just before 9 a.m. on July 30.

"We heard it first," said patrolman Pvt. Steven Ehman, "and we just thought it was planes going over. We looked out toward the direction of the traffic circle and saw the big flames."



Ehman

A gas leak being investigated by Belgian emergency responders in Ghislenghein had spectacularly and violently erupted into a roaring tower of flames licking 200 meters into the sky.

"I went out there and saw the massive fireball," said Sgt. Eric Martin, the on-duty desk sergeant, "and I said, 'Go. Get out there. Go now.' And a few people from the offices came running out into the hallway to see what was going on. Staff Sgt. (Jimmy) Scoggins was one of them and I asked him if he would go with one of my patrols. So all five of them went out there to see what was going on. Then I came back to the desk and I called the Belgian Federal Police station on SHAPE to notify them of the explosion. When my patrols arrived out there, they were the first medically-trained personnel on scene. There was no delay in dispatching them. We witnessed the explosion. They went straight there. We weren't that far away."



Scoggins

The MP station on Chièvres Air Base is about six miles from the industrial area of Ghislenghein where the fire was roaring out of control.

"On the way you could hear the roar of the fire and see it," said Staff Sgt. Jimmy Scoggins, the 80th Area Support Group physical security inspector. "Once we got there, it was still going on three or four more minutes because the fire actually roared for



PHOTO: Rick Haverinen

**Belgians leave a floral tribute Aug. 2 in the industrial section of Ghislenghein for 18 emergency personnel and workmen killed July 30 in a devastating explosion of a natural gas pipeline. Those killed included five firemen, a policeman, and an Electrabel employee who were investigating a report of a gas odor and evacuating the area when the escaping gas ignited around 9 a.m. Over 120 suffered burns.**

maybe 10-15 minutes. And I just wasn't sure what would keep feeding a fire like that, keep it going so long."

What everyone for many miles around Ghislenghein couldn't help witnessing on July 30 was the ignition of natural gas gushing from a ruptured one-meter diameter high-pressure pipeline running from Zeebrugge on the Belgian coast to France.



Mendoza

As the MP vehicles approached the scene. Pvt. Lauren Mendoza, a patrolman, saw where to stop.

"I went directly where we saw four people on the ground with smoke coming out of their backs," Mendoza said. "So we rushed over there. There were two civilians helping them out. And you don't really think, you just go for whatever your mind tells you is the right thing to do."

"At first, a lot of the civilians were kind of

awe-struck," Scoggins said. "When we got there a lot of people just stared in disbelief as the



Kupec

first injured people managed to stumble their way back down to the road where we were. Once it was obvious the injured needed (treatment) to keep (their burns) moist because they lost their top layer of skin, (neighbors) began bringing blankets out. A lot of them offered their water wells, pails, buckets, to help."

"We stopped about 100 yards away because there were ten people laying on the side of the road," Ehman said, "so we started helping them as best we could, applying water (to their burn wounds) and covering them up and trying to get them to calm down so we could help them."

**See DISASTER Page 3.**



# Bush announces military repositioning; ground forces in Europe to return to U.S.

*"Over the coming decade, we will deploy a more agile and more flexible force, which means that more of our troops will be stationed and deployed from here at home. We will move some of our troops and capabilities to new locations, so they can surge quickly to deal with unexpected threats. We'll take advantage of 21st century military technologies to rapidly deploy increased combat power. The new plan will help us fight and win these wars of the 21st century. It will strengthen our alliances around the world, while we build new partnerships to better preserve the peace. It will reduce the stress on our troops and our military families."*

**President George W. Bush**  
**August 16, 2004**

*Compiled from White House press releases*

U.S. President George Bush announced Aug. 16 the most comprehensive restructuring of U.S. military forces overseas since the end of the Korean War. By closing bases no longer needed to meet Cold War threats that have ended, this new initiative will bring home many Cold War-era forces while deploying more flexible and rapidly deployable capabilities in strategic locations around the world.

Bush announced the restructuring in a speech addressed to a convention of Veterans of Foreign Wars in Cincinnati.

Taking advantage of 21st century military technologies, the plan will increase U.S. military capabilities and combat power in every part of the world; improve our cooperation with, and our ability to defend, allies; and strengthen our ability to deter aggression — all while reducing the number of U.S. forces stationed at overseas bases.

The plan will make America safer by better preparing our military to address the new dangers associated with rogue nations, global terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction.

Over the next ten years, the President's plan will close hundreds of U.S. facilities overseas and bring home about 60,000 to 70,000 uniformed personnel and approximately 100,000 family members and civilian employees.

The plan will give our service members more time on the home front and fewer moves over a career. It will give military spouses fewer job changes and offer greater stability for their families. And it will save the taxpayers money, by closing hundreds of unneeded fa-



**President George Bush addresses the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention Aug. 16 in Cincinnati.**

cilities around the world.

Goals of Our Plan for a 21st Century Military:

Expand U.S. defense relationships with allies and build new partnerships. Posture changes will increase our ability to carry out our defense commitments more effectively. The U.S. presence will be tailored to optimally balance our 21st century military requirements, our relationships with allies and partners, local conditions, and the impact of a U.S. presence on host nations.

Develop flexibility to contend with uncertainty. Global threats to our national security can defy prediction. Therefore, the United States will develop new and expanded security relationships to emphasize flexibility in force posture. Provide for both a regional and global forward presence. The

demands of new threats require forces deployed overseas to be ready for missions anywhere in the world, regardless of where the forces are based — while we must be prepared to act regionally and locally and to maintain our commitments to NATO and other allies.

Enable rapid power projection. Our overseas force realignment must improve rapid response capabilities for distant contingencies, because our forces will not likely fight where they are stationed. This requires an updated transport infrastructure to facilitate movement of forces, prepositioned equipment along transport routes, and lean command structures for deployable operations.

Focus on capabilities instead of numbers. Leveraging U.S. advantages in speed, reach, preci-

sion, knowledge, and combat power is now the defining concept for military action. The number of forward-based forces in a given area is no longer an accurate representation of the effective military capability that the U.S. can bring to bear.

## Outline of Changes

**Europe:** Our efforts will support NATO's own transformation. We aim to eliminate Cold War infrastructures that are no longer relevant to today's security needs, replacing them with more flexible, deployable forces and headquarters. Our future posture will contain forward forces that are rapidly deployable for early entry into conflict both in Europe and beyond.

Heavy forces designed for a land war in Europe will return to the U.S.; they will be replaced by advanced, deployable capabilities and airborne units, supported by advanced training facilities and high-capacity mobility infrastructure.

Ground, air, and naval headquarters will be streamlined and consolidated.

Special forces, both forward-stationed and rotational, will increase in importance; they will be positioned for ease of movement both within and outside of Europe.

**The Middle East Region:** Cooperation and access provided by coalition partners during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom provide us with a solid basis for other forms of future cooperation.

We will maintain, and in some cases upgrade, sites for rotational forces and contingency purposes, supported by forward headquarters and advanced training facilities.

Rotational air, ground, and sea forces will provide presence, and assurance to our allies and partners, without permanence. While we desire close relationships with Afghanistan and Iraq that will allow us to continue to play a positive role in their rebuilding efforts and in long-term regional security, any decision on long-term U.S. presence in these countries is a sovereign choice for their people and governments.

**Asia:** We will improve our ability to deter, dissuade, and defeat challenges in Asia through strengthened long-range strike capabilities, streamlined and consolidated headquarters, and a network of access arrangements.

The forward stationing of additional expeditionary maritime capabilities in the Pacific will enable prompt and effective military action both regionally and globally.

Advanced strike assets will be stationed in the Western Pacific.

In Northeast Asia we are working with our strongest allies to restructure our military presence and command structures while simultaneously improving capabilities in the region.

In Central and Southeast Asia we are working to establish a network of sites to provide training opportunities and contingency access both for conventional and special forces.

**Africa and Latin America:** We will expand our cooperative security relationships in Latin America and Africa to help partners meet the challenges they face.

We will enhance regional training, assist partners in building capacity for counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics, and maintain contingency access for remote areas.

We have no plans for Main Operating Bases in these regions.

## USAREUR commander reflects on Labor Day

Bell Sends #24-04

2 August 2004

Labor Day Weekend Safety

1. As the Labor Day weekend approaches (3 through 6 September), so does the third anniversary of the terrorist attack against our great Nation. We cannot help but think about the events of that tragic day and how much the world has changed since then, as we continue to fight and win the Global War on Terrorism. For those who are not deployed and in the fight, Labor Day affords us the opportunity to take time over the holiday weekend to honor those who built our country, while always remembering those who are fighting and securing our future.

2. Labor Day is celebrated to recognize the contributions of American workers and the sacrifices they made to help make the United States the premier force in the world economy. The American workforce and our incredible work ethic make our country the economic model for all nations.

3. As we honor the men and women who built our country,



**Gen. B. B. Bell**

those for whom you are responsible. I also ask that you do the following:

- Give thanks to the people you work with.
- Talk to your subordinates. Meet with each of them "under the oak tree" to discuss their holiday plans and ensure they make smart decisions on how to manage the risks associated with whatever they plan to do over the holiday.
- Take time to relax and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

5. Thanks again to all the USAREUR Soldiers and civilians who are deployed. We miss you and look forward to your return. For those of you in garrison in USAREUR, I look forward to seeing each of you return to work safely after the holiday—rested and ready to continue to execute with excellence. Any Mission, Anywhere!

*B. B. Bell*

**B. B. BELL**  
General, USA  
Commanding

## DISASTER from Page 1.

And then (patrolman Pfc. Katrina) Kupec and I went up closer to the flames but the smoke started coming into the car. We didn't have masks or anything, so we just turned around. But we helped the (Belgian) federal police bring people down from where the flames were. We'd drive up there, pick up a few people and bring them back down to where we were at the beginning."



**Turbitt**

"We helped prevent some of the victims from going into shock," said Pfc. Katrina Kupec. "We helped them breathe, we put cold water on them, put burn pads on them, helped cut off their clothing. A few of them we picked up and brought over where we could get water on their bodies."

Kupec, who has completed the Army's first responder training, estimates the MPs treated 50-60 victims in four hours.

As the MPs started helping victims, the atmosphere was still threatening.

"The flames looked like a skyscraper," said patrolman Pfc. Steven Turbitt.

"We had to scream back and forth so we could hear each other," Ehman said.

About 10-15 minutes after the explosion, someone closed a pipeline valve somewhere toward Zeebrugge, ending the flames shooting high into the sky. Buildings in the industrial area still burned.

While the MPs were trying to help victims as best they could, some members of Task Force Reaper Sentinel, Army



**Bouillon**



PHOTO: F. Neil Neeley

## You never know when you'll need what you know.

Sgt. Ramon Alcantara, left in group of three Soldiers, watches Sgt. Joseph Cicchillo demonstrate how to insert an IV needle in the arm of Sgt. Nathan Harmon. The Soldiers were studying emergency medical procedures in the Combat Lifesaver course July 14 at the SHAPE clinic. Just 16 days later, Alcantara was applying what he learned from this same course to treat the real-world burn casualties in Ghislenghien.

National Guardsmen from 1st of the 134th Field Artillery Bn., deployed to Europe for force protection duty from their home base in Columbus, Ohio, started to arrive. They helped the victims, did traffic control, and searched the area for more casualties.

"I had to report back (to the MP station) what was going on and what we were dealing with," Scoggins said,

"and a federal policeman told that they would like to have more medical personnel."

"Approximately a half hour after the explosion, I got a call requesting more medical assistance, because they weren't prepared for a disaster this size," Martin said, "so

See DISASTER Page 4.

# Disaster reveals substance of emergency workers

**Commentary by Rick Haverinen**

Belgium was shocked July 30 as a natural gas leak in Ghislenghien exploded killing 18 and burning about 120 more.

Construction workers at a project next to Diamand Board, a company that manufactures rotary diamond cutting blades, could smell gas around 8 a.m. The City of Ath responded with several fire crews. Police officers and employees of Electrabel, the company that provides natural gas service in the area also reported. These emergency workers confirmed the problem and began evacu-

nated the spreading natural gas plume.

About a minute or two before 9 a.m., an explosion shook the ground so hard it could be felt for miles. The gas leak became a roaring inferno. The source was a one-meter-wide major pipeline that transports natural gas from Zeebrugge to France under tremendous pressure. The explosion blew a ten-meter long section of the pipeline hundreds of meters away. Gas gushed from the opening, and already ignited, the flames reached 200 meters into the sky. A thick mushroom cloud rose hundreds of meters higher. The roar was deaf-

Ath, a policeman and an Electrabel troubleshooter. Another three have died from burns in hospitals. One who was missing was found dead the next week.

Some victims had been hurled hundreds of meters by the explosion. Over 120 more survived but suffered burns, some of which were third degree burns over large areas of their bodies. The intense heat burned their backs as they ran away.

The flames incinerated or scorched about everything in a 500 meter radius.

The roof of a carton manufacturing company collapsed. The severe heat buckled the corner of a textile company building several hundred meters away.

A van carrying children for an outing at the nearby Park Paradisio stopped near a traffic circle just northwest of the pipeline rupture. A boy standing near the parked van suffered severe burns when the escaping gas ignited. A motorist on A8 driving with his window open was burned at the same instant. The slight elevation of the autoroute at an overpass might have accounted for the motorist being burned, but conversely for protecting a gasoline station just north of the A8 from going up in flames.

Excavation work is thought to be the cause of the initial gas leak. It's not clear when the pipeline might have been disturbed, as it could have been some weeks earlier or more recently, perhaps the day before. Apparently the work crew was not aware of the presence of the high pressure gas line, which was about 1 1/2 meters down

from the surface, within easy reach of about any construction digging machine.

The Belgian government declared Aug. 4 a national day of mourning. This was the same date a joint funeral service was

held at L'église Saint-Julien in Ath for the five firemen, the police officer and the Electrabel employee who perished. Hundreds filled the sanctuary to capacity and hundreds more lined the streets to show their respect as seven groups of pallbearers carried the caskets toward the church. Firemen wore their uniforms and helmets and displayed fire trucks literally covered with flower arrangements, so great was the outpouring of sorrow felt by the public.

Other funeral services were held privately for construction workers and employees of surrounding businesses killed in the inferno.

The disaster was man-made and will be thoroughly investigated. Some better information about what happened and accompanying safety recommendations will be pieced together over time.

The sorrow and shock set in quickly and those emotions will endure for generations. Many families are shattered.

The seven souls mourned in Ath on Aug. 4 were at the location before the fire erupted the previous Friday to protect the lives and safety of anybody in that area. It must make any emergency worker think twice as they drive to the location of a reported gas leak. Where there's gas, there can also be fire.

The half hour or so available to the emergency responders to alert people to move away before the gas ignited on July 30 must have saved many lives.

What happened in Ghislenghien on July 30 will be chiseled on the memory of any Belgian emergency responder called out to work the next similar situation. We've all learned how terribly it can go wrong. While some of us on the sidelines might balk, the emergency workers will still race out there, they'll figure out what needs to be done, and do it. That's the typical working day of any emergency responder. They soak up the injury and drive on. They do it for their family and friends and for people they've never met.

Our heroism is their routine.



PHOTO: Rick Haverinen

**A Belgian police officer examines the burned cab of a truck parked next to the heavily-damaged Diamand Board building in Ghislenghien July 31. The gas pipeline erupted on the opposite side of the building from this location. The heat-damaged corner of the Stiernon textile factory can be seen at upper left. The explosion and fire flattened the roof of another building housing the J&S packaging company.**

ing employees from several buildings in the industrial pocket just south of Autoroute A8.

About 30 minutes after the emergency crews arrived, some unknown source ig-

ning. It was 10-15 minutes before a valve was closed somewhere up the pipeline, ending the hideous inferno.

Sixteen were quickly found dead at the scene. These included five firemen from





PHOTO: Rick Haverinen

The City of Chièvres held a reception Aug. 11 to honor the city's firemen and U.S. military personnel who worked on the disastrous natural gas pipeline explosion and fire July 30 in Ghislenghien. One of the speakers was 80th Area Support Group deputy commander Lt.Col. William Leady, standing at the right side of the table. The

firemen marched from the station to city hall and less than a minute later an alarm sent them running back to the station in their dress uniforms to speed away in their vehicles. The large crowd expressed respect for their firemen by applauding each time they appeared. The five firemen killed in the inferno were from Ath.

### From DISASTER Page 3.

I called up all my off-duty first responders, both military police and just regular personnel, and requested them to come in."

Belgian emergency medical personnel started showing up in Ghislenghien.

"They had ambulances lined up forever," Ehman said, "like 20-30 ambulances lined up and then they started bringing in helicopters to pull (the victims) out."

Martin requested the U.S. Air Force fire department, also on Chièvres Air Base, to assist. The firemen at 309th Airlift Squadron were packed up and ready to go. Like everyone, they had heard the loud rumble at 9 a.m. and stepped outside and saw the huge flames and smoke billowing into the sky.

"We started getting everything ready right away," said fire chief Air Force Master Sgt. Kevin Bouillon, "because it was big enough they might call us. Our initial impression was it probably was a gas line or a rail accident."

More National Guard Soldiers from Task Force Reaper Sentinel arrived around 10:30 a.m.

"When we got there it was still a little hectic," said Pfc. Demisho Bradford, 1st of the 134th Field Artillery Bn. "One of the civilian EMTs asked us to go through a wheat field and look for casualties."

"They needed us to do the field sweep which is what we do when we have a police call," said Sgt. Alan Stiles.

The National Guard Soldiers came across dead victims in the field, some of whom had been hurled hundreds of meters when the pipeline exploded.

"It's not the first time I saw anybody who had (died)," said Spc. Ross Willis, "but it's the first time I had ever seen anybody who was killed, and I think that bothered me for a little while. Talking to some of these guys actually helped me accept it."

"It was the first time for me also," said Sgt. Philip Waldren. "I talked with the chaplain and he helped me

go through it a little bit myself."

The shock of encountering death at a disaster was tempered with knowledge the Soldiers had helped people who very much needed them.

"We freed somebody else up who was more in touch with the situation," said Spc. Matthew Scur. "We freed them up to do something more important. So, we still did an important job. Sometimes that's part of the job description and you've got to accept it."

The Air Force firemen arrived in Ghislenghien around 10:45 a.m., and by that time the Belgians had improvised a triage and treatment center at a school in the village.

Firemen are used to treating burns and are equipped with supplies for the task. The Belgian medical personnel were rapidly going through their own stock treating around 120 burn victims at the scene.

"I think they expended most of it," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Travis Johnston, "and we brought quite a bit of burn pads and some boxes of gauze and gloves, the stuff we need to do our job. The (large) burn pads were a big help."

"They were using the little pads, trying to put 20-30 on a person's back," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Gerardo Shorey. "With the burn pads we brought, two would cover the whole backside of an individual. The majority of people were burned on their backs, like they were running from the incident. Since the initial notification to evacuate, they had a little bit of time, so they were going away from the emergency when it was just a gas leak."

"When we were preparing to go, we had already heard reports that it was a factory," Bouillon said, "and where there's a factory usually there's a lot of people. So right away we imagined there was going to be a lot injured and casualties, so we grabbed everything we had that we could spare."

The Air Force firemen estimated they treated 40-60 burn victims ranging 20-60 years in age. The majority of injured were male.

Ambulances kept arriving to take victims to area hospitals and specialty burn treatment centers, and eventually the Belgians could take care of the injured on their own. Most of the Americans had returned to

their regular duty stations by 2 p.m.

"When you think about things like this, and you see them on TV, if I was there I probably would freak out," Mendoza said, "but I kept calm, just a little worried about the people. Your feelings do get involved. I kept staying professional. Afterward, I was like, 'Wow!' But when you're on it, you have to understand that other people out there are counting on you. If they see you out there breaking down, what else are they going to do, break down with you. So that's what I thought. If they see me out here, not doing the right thing or not acting professional, they're going to act worse, so that's what I had in the back of my mind. It helped me stay strong."

"I knew that there's chances for major incidents (when I enlisted) in the Army where there's world-wide events that I'll be taking part in," Turbitt said, "but you don't know how you're going to feel or what's

going to happen to you until you have that event happen in your life."

"I think the adrenaline is there upon response," Johnston said, "but once you get there, your training activates and it just becomes habit on how you would deal with them. When you're going from patient to patient my training says, 'Apply this pad

in this manner,' and you do it. A lot of time you think back on what you did and that thought might come back, 'Whoa, that was a big emergency.' Most of your adrenaline is on the way there, getting ready, because you don't know what to expect. Once you get there, you see what it is, you go, 'I can handle this. This is just burn victims versus (going) into the fire area and pulling people out.'"

Some of the training U.S. military personnel received was coincidentally in the nick of time. Sgt. Ramon Alcantara is driver for 80th Area Support Group Command Sgt. Maj. Jose Rogers. Alcantara was a student in the Army's combat lifesaver course July 12-14. On July 30 he was using the course's instruction to treat burn victims in Ghislenghien, something he didn't foresee two weeks earlier.

"A lot of times when we take courses, we take it so we'll have knowledge on what we have to do and later we practice it over and over again," Alcantara said. "We always have continuous training to make sure that you don't forget what you've learned."

See DISASTER Page 7.



Bradford



Waldren



Stiles



Scur



Willis



Johnston



Shorey



# Vacation Bible School kids go for gold in Brussels



Granny opened fire at Vacation Bible School in Brussels the week of July 26, much to the delight of the young scholars. While looking for her cap and goggles, she pulled non-essentials from her bag like glue, binoculars, cooking pan, base-

ball cap and tape. After donning her cap and goggles, she suddenly pulled out the gun, took aim and fired on the unsuspecting audience of olympic athletes, coaches and parents. Debi Goodman, VBS co-director, takes cover behind her.

Story and photos by Dorothy Nevins

This year's theme for the Vacation Bible School Program, SonGames 2004, was inspired by the Olympics in Athens.



Garrin Rard, 11, and Peter Oppenheim, 10, go airborne.

Brussels NSA Chapel was transformed into the olympic stadium for SonGames 2004 each night for three hours the week of July 26. Thirty volunteers contributed their time and talents to train and strengthen over fifty young athletes, ranging from beginners at age 2 through fifth grade. The children learned about Paul's adventures and the meaning of being a member of God's team. Leaders taught a new Bible story, verse

"Vacation Bible School is a great learning experience for both the children and the volunteers," said Debi Goodman, co-director of this year's VBS program. Each session was packed with fun. The music session taught the children songs and dances, complete with props and centered around each of the daily themes, "Join In! Team Up! Get Strong! Keep On! and Celebrate!"

Craft activities included making team flags and visors, gold medals and coloring projects. Recreation time included competition in the VBS Olympic sports of super soccer, volleyball relay, baseball, basketball tag and a funathlon. During class time, the children learned Bible verses and stories and through video, were introduced to five Olympic medallists who also found Jesus as their coach.

The puppet team entertained during story time with the adventures of three athletes from Smallvania: gymnast Tumbelina Turnover, weightlifter Brutus Liftsalot and runner Stella Swift. Joe Gabbyola, sports-caster for VBSN-TV and newspaper reporter, Scoop Ice Cream, provided coverage of the daily trials and tribulations of the athletes and the importance of teamwork. Special guest appearances were also made by Granny, Toulouse and Coach, characters from the local community.

The children gave offerings during the opening ceremonies. The results were tallied before the closing ceremonies for a friendly competition between the boys and girls. If the boys won, Granny would get a pie in the face. If the girls won, Andrew Stark, music volunteer, would be wearing pie. Tension was mounting by the fourth day with only \$1.50 separating the boys and girls. The final day arrived. Secretly



Shelby Pitman, 3, enjoys the summer sun.

wishing the girls would win but not very hopeful, Granny came prepared with goggles and a swim cap to protect her vibrant blue locks. The competition resulted in the girls winning. Andrew Stark took a pie in the face for the boys, but most importantly, over \$530 was raised for the Elim Christian Center in Poland. Although the cream pie was only temporary, the lessons learned and friendships formed at Vacation Bible School will be long lasting.



Andrew Stark takes a direct pie hit on behalf of the boys.



Scoop Ice Cream proves his universal puppet appeal during story time with the beginners class.



Left to right, Marquez Belle, 6, Mark VanderHeyden, 7, (in yellow shirt) and Dominique Thompson, 6, flex their muscles practicing "Getting Strong" in first and second grade music class.

and theme each day and reinforced lessons through various olympic-themed puppet skits, guest appearances and activities.

After the opening ceremonies each day, the children were separated into five age groups and rotated between five stations, music, crafts, recreation, class and story time. The groups all met up again for the closing ceremonies to review the daily lesson, story, verse and songs.



Cindy and Jack Marr teach the moves to "God Promised" in a beginners music class.



## Brussels Community Calendar

**ACS** - Toddler Play Group meets every Tuesday and Thursday through Aug. 26, 10 a.m.-noon, CYS multi-purpose room; Prenatal classes available on request, call 02 717-9684; National School Lunch program offers free or reduced priced lunches to eligible families, call 02 717-9698 for info; For sponsorship training, call the ACS Relocation Readiness Program Manager at 02 717-9729; Newcomers Briefing featuring key agency overview, Aug. 24, 8:45 a.m.-2:30 p.m., NSA Building 3, command conference room; Newcomers briefing featuring hospital tour and general information about Belgium, Aug. 25, 9:25 a.m.- noon, ACS NSA Building 4; Newcomers briefing featuring local food store information, Aug. 26, 9:30-11 a.m., ACS NSA Building 4. Info or sign-up: 02 717-9783.

**Brussels Community Information Fair** is Sept. 10, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at NATO Support Activity. With over 100 organizations participating, the Information Fair is an invaluable one-stop opportunity for community members to learn about clubs, organizations, communes, churches, youth activities and other resources. Info: ACS, 02 717-9783 or CLO, 02 508-2289.

**NSA Job opportunities** - Bar Assistant, NA-7405-2 (flex), open continuous position, announcement number NAF-CHI-OC05; Caterer, NF-1101-3 (flex), announcement NAF-CHI-040324-A, closing Aug. 31; part time Recreation Specialist (youth activities), BA-0188-05/07, Host Nation announcement BEL-HN-04-053 under LN employment section. Full position descriptions are at the

NAF employment section, [www.chrma.hqusa.army.mil](http://www.chrma.hqusa.army.mil). Info: Jean-Luc Clarembau, 02 717-9735 or [jean-luc.clarembau@benelux.army.mil](mailto:jean-luc.clarembau@benelux.army.mil). **NSA Chapel** - Sunday School for all ages every Sunday starting Sept. 12, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Info: 02 717-9708.

**Outdoor Recreation** - Amsterdam, Aug. 21, 7 a.m.-9:30 p.m., \$40 adults, \$33 children; North sea fishing, Aug. 28., Euro 65; Antwerp, Rubens house, Sept. 11, \$40 adults, \$33 children; Canterbury, Sept. 25, 5 a.m.-11 p.m., \$45 adults, \$39 children. Info: Leon Dillien 474 68 35 44 or 02 717-9775.

**Three Star Lounge** - New summer hours: Friday 5 p.m.-1 a.m. (open Thursday 7-11 p.m. if Friday falls on a holiday), Saturday 7 p.m.-1 a.m.; Parents' back to school bash, Aug. 28, 9 p.m.; Movie Night every Friday, 7 p.m. with free popcorn; Back to middle school dance Sept. 18, 7-10 p.m. Info: 02 717-9822/9819.

**Multi-Craft Center** - The Multi-Craft Center will be closed Monday-Thursday during August, open Friday 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Brussels prints and tapestries for purchase, \$15-\$63; Engraving and art restoration services available; Basic ceramics for adults and children, Saturdays, 10 a.m.; Children's birthday parties; Wood shop power tools, Saturday-Sunday, 10 a.m., by appointment; Motorcycle classes, Wednesday, 7-9 p.m.; auto crafts, Thursday, 7-9 p.m.; Summer vehicle checks by appointment, \$30. Info or sign-up: 02 717-9629.

**Sports and Fitness** - Ongoing and

## A-track-tion for the family

**"Tanks in Town" is set for Aug. 28-29 in Mons. This annual gathering of World War II tanks and vehicles commemorates the Liberation of Mons on Sept. 2, 1944 by the 3rd U.S. Armored Div. This 60th anniversary includes a WWII bivouac recreation and a display of vintage vehicles and tanks Aug. 28 at the "Bois Brûlé" in Ghlin located next to the racecourse. Visitors can ride some of the tanks including a personnel carrier M113, a Russian tank, a Sherman tank or the "Fish and Chips" Stuart tank, the first to enter Mons in 1944.**

**Access to the site is free for all U.S. ID cardholders and is Euro 5 for others. Rides on the tanks range Euro 5-40 per person. Two liberty convoys form Aug. 29, 9 a.m., at the 'Bois Brûlé'. One convoy of tanks and armored vehicles heads to the square at Jemappes, approximate arrival 10 a.m.; and to the square at Cuesmes, where they will arrive around noon. At approximately 1:30 p.m., the convoy departs to Mesvin, to arrive about 2 p.m. on Voie des Américains, near the**



**Mesvin cemetery, where tanks and vehicles drive down the hill next to each other. They then drive through Hyon at about 4 p.m. and after joining the vehicle convoy, they peacefully invade the historical Mons main square about 5:30 p.m. The second convoy of vintage vehicles goes through Givry (11 a.m.), Frameries (12:30 a.m.), Mesvin (2 p.m.), St. Symphorien and joins the tanks at the Mons main square about 5:30 p.m.**

self-paced Run For Life program, patches awarded for 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 750 and 1000 miles; ongoing individual MEDEX training. Info: 02 717-9667.

**NSA Youth Sports** - Youth soccer and flag football coaches needed; Bitty Booters Start Smart soccer for 3-4 year olds starts mid-Sept., sessions are Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 p.m. or Saturdays 9:30-10:30 a.m., \$30 includes soccer balls, shin guards, cones, jersey and parent manual, YS registration and current health assessment required. Info: 02 717-9649.

**Child and Youth Services** - Modified full day camp Aug. 30-Sept. 3, NSA Youth Center; registration ongoing for regular School Age Services and Middle School/Teen

programs which begin Sept. 7; back to school middle school dance Sept. 18, 7-10 p.m., NSA Three Star Lounge; Parent Advisory Council meeting, Sept. 23, 5-6 p.m., ACS Conference Room, BSA Building 4. Info: 02 717-9665.

**Library** - Story Time for 3-6 year olds every Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.; New hours, Monday closed, Tuesday-Thursday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Friday noon-7 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday noon-5 p.m. Info: 02 717-9705.

**Consignment Shop** - Open Wednesdays and Fridays only, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. through Aug. 31; no clothing consignments will be accepted in August. Info: 02 717-9724.

**NSA Food Court** - New hours: Monday-Wednesday 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Thursday 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Friday 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Saturday-Sunday 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Info: 02 717-9789.

**Installation Volunteer Coordinator** - If you have time on your hands, want to do something different and help the community at the same time, become a volunteer for one of our many DCA facilities, programs or special events. You can learn a new skill, help kids, work with computers or teach an art class and put it on your resume. Info: 02 717-9679.

*For more information about events happening in the Brussels community, visit [www.brussels.army.mil](http://www.brussels.army.mil).*

## 254th BSB Local Calendar

**Chapel staff contract positions** in the 254th BSB are bid annually and start Oct. 1: Catholic and Protestant religious education coordinators; keyboard musicians for Catholic and Protestant services; Catholic priest and Orthodox priest. Info: Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Scott Borderud, DSN 364-2214 or 31 45 526-2214, email [scott.borderud@benelux.army.mil](mailto:scott.borderud@benelux.army.mil).

**The renovated JFC Fitness Center** at Brunssum will open Aug. 25, 10 a.m. The ceremony and Fitness Fair is open to all NATO ID card holders. Agencies will provide information with health, wellness, and safety-displays and activities to include an Aerobicthon, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and a spinning class, 11 a.m.-noon. Info: DSN 364-3170/3171 or 31 45 563-3170/3171.

**Emergency number in Essent** has changed in case of failure with electricity or gas to 0800 9009. The phone is answered 24 hours a day. Maintenance mechanics should arrive within two hours.

**Upscale Resale Thrift Shop** at Schinnen - The shop has relocated to Building 24, the former Self Help shop, next to the post office and is open Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. and Sunday, noon-4 p.m. They accept consignments up to 1 hour before closure and donations anytime. Info: 31 46 443-7436.

**Army Community Service - Playgroup for toddlers**, Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30, 9:30-11:30 a.m., at Schinnen sports center; *Infant massage class*, Sept. 7, and 21, 10 a.m., at Schinnen ACS conference room; OB ori-

entation and prenatal education class, Sept. 21, 10 a.m.-noon, at GK clinic conference room. Info: DSN 360-7500/7367/7355 or 046 443 7500/7367/7335, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. in Schinnen, Building 39.

**Schinnen Sports and Fitness** - *Taebo / kickboxing* every Monday and Wednesday, 6-7 p.m.; *Step aerobics* every Tuesday and Thursday, 6-7 p.m.; *Body Balance* every Thursday, 5-6 p.m. Info: DSN 360-7561 or 046 443-7561, Schinnen Sports Center, Building 38.

**Youth Services** - Youth in grades 6-8 must be registered, yearly fee is \$15. Info: DSN 364-3595 or 0455 263595, AFNorth, Building H603, Monday-Friday, 3:30-6 p.m. after school; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. non-school days.

**Teen Center** - Youth in grades 9-12 must be registered as YS members to use the center. There is no cost to register. Info: DSN 364-3595 or 0455 263595, Schinnen Sports Center, Building 38, Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

**Bowling Center** - Cosmic Bowling every Friday, 6 p.m. The center offers 12 lanes with leagues, open bowling, and a youth program. Info: DSN 360-7207 or 046 443-7207, Schinnen Building 40, Closed Monday-Tuesday; open Wednesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

**Indoor Swimming Pool** - Building H605, AFNorth, located next to the Arts and Crafts Center and the tennis courts: Monday closed; Tuesday-Friday 4-7 p.m.; and Saturday-Sunday noon-4 p.m. Info: DSN 364-3172 or 045 443-3172.

**Motorcycle safety** - BRC class: Sept. 12 and 13, 1 p.m., at Schinnen classroom; Sept. 13 and 14, 7:30 a.m., at AFNorth slag heap training range. ERC class: Aug. 16-17 and Sept. 15, 7:30 a.m., at AFNorth slag heap training range. Instructor needs 3-6 riders to offer class. Info: Wauter Vermeulen, DSN 360-7433, 31 46 443-7433.

**AFNORTH Knights Motorcycle Club (AKMCC)** is a recognized morale and welfare organization open to the AFNORTH Community, NATO ID cardholders and their families. The program includes visits to motorcycle shows (Utrecht), motorcycle races (Assen), organised day trips, weekend tours (Tenetentref), regular run outs and social gatherings. Info: Brian Leith, 31 45 526-2972; Jim Holt, 31 45 526-3016 and Jim White, 31 45 526-3047. Email [KNIGHTSMCC@hotmail.com](mailto:KNIGHTSMCC@hotmail.com).

### Geilenkirchen

**Women's Equality Day Luncheon** is Aug. 26, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Officers' Club at NATO Air Base in Geilenkirchen. Guest speaker is the Honorable Michele T. Bond, U.S. Consulate General, The Netherlands. Tickets cost Euro 8.50 from Monique Dismuke, DSN 360-7494, or 31 46 443-7494 or Sgt. 1st Class David Williams, DSN 360-7534 or 31 46 443-7534.

**Clinic news** - The U.S. Clinic at Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base invites beneficiaries to attend a Customer Focus Group Sept. 29, 2 p.m., in the U.S. Clinic

conference room. Please forward questions, comments or issues to Senior Airman Veronica Dudley, [Veronica.Dudley@geilenkirchen.af.mil](mailto:Veronica.Dudley@geilenkirchen.af.mil) or call 49 2451 99-3535. *New space available policy at US Clinic* Due to an unexpected gap in medical providers, the US Clinic at Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base is no longer able to provide medical care to space available patients or retirees who have not enrolled in TRICARE plus. For the time being, the clinic strongly requests individuals to not put off any healthcare concerns due to lack of access at the GK Clinic. A list of Dutch and German primary care managers is available at the U.S. Clinic in Geilenkirchen. The U.S. Clinic pharmacy will still refill current prescriptions for space available patients and retirees not enrolled in TRICARE Plus but they will not be able to rewrite expired prescriptions. Info: 49 2451 99-3310/3321. *The Red Cross office at Geilenkirchen* has moved from Bldg. 161, Wellness Center, to the U.S. Clinic. They are now located in the basement next to the lab and can be reached at 49 2451 63-2068.

*Sports physicals at Geilenkirchen* will be completed at the clinic instead of at the school gym this year. The clinic encourages parents to schedule physicals as early as possible during the summer. Appointments are 1-4:50 p.m., Aug. 18 and 25. The clinic will only see TRICARE beneficiaries for sports physicals. Other patients should plan to see a downtown provider.

From DISASTER Page 4.

Alcantara should remember how to treat burns for a long time from his work in the triage point in the Ghislenghien school.

"I just helped aid anybody that I could," Alcantara said, "putting bandages on the burns so they wouldn't get infected. The room that we were in had guys that were severely burned and the doctor was taking care of them. We went around and put bandages over the burns and poured water over the burns to keep them cool."

It seems remarkable that emergency responders at the scene had all the victims moved to treatment areas within one hour after the fire – under the circumstances, an extremely fast time.

"I was impressed on how everybody came together," Bouillon said. "They had the Belgian military out there as well, and just how all the different units, the ambulances, the police, the military, civilians, just came together and just worked as a big team. You don't always see that, especially when you work with different jurisdictions and different fire departments, because they do things differently."

The work in Ghislenghien of the U.S. military personnel, some of whom are only in their first year of active duty, certainly got the attention of their commanders.

"I'm extremely proud of what they did," said Maj.



Morey

Francis Davidson, 80th ASG provost marshal. "When the five personnel that we initially sent got out there, their medical training and first responder training took over, and it's awesome. They made the transition from what we first thought might have been an incident in a military area of interest to a mission of humanitarian assistance, and they made the transition readily. They provided medical support, they did an evacuation and they helped out with traffic control. It's just amazing."

The U.S. military members working the disaster saw quickly the Belgians very much appreciated their presence.

"I thought they were very glad to have us there," said Sgt. Wayne Morey, the MP training NCO. "They had extra sets of hands for getting supplies and water and bandages for them. They were very happy to have us. My wife knew I'd be there as soon as it happened, because she knows that I'm one of those people that helps everybody, no matter what goes on. That's what an MP's life role is, to help everyone else and not worry about yourself. It's just our job."

"They all said thanks," Alcantara said. "Every time we treated somebody, even if we just handed them a glass of water, they all said thank you. When we first got there, Staff Sgt. (Edward) Hoffman told the lady that greeted us, 'We're here from Chièvres Air Base. We're here to provide medical aid.' And the lady

was very grateful. She said, "Thank you for coming," and she directed us in the direction where they mainly needed us. All the victims that were there had burns. They were very, very kind."

"I was very impressed by the way they accepted us when we walked on the scene," Stiles said. "They got us someone who spoke English because we have the language barrier. They broke that right away. And they said, 'This is what we need you to do.' Everybody worked as a team. They had everything set up just the way it should go."

The Americans discovered they could get around some language difficulties just by using hand signals.

"It seemed everybody was happy to see us," Scur said. "I guess if I were on the other side, I would have said something (thankful) if another country came over here to help us. And I kind of noticed that look on a couple people's faces. They were just happy to see us there."

"I saw the same thing," Waldren said, "but I didn't get that vibe until way later. Like, 'Wow, we were helping someone else out.' It might be that down the road, they'll be helping us out."

"I'm pretty sure that if it was the other way around, if we were having a crisis on our installation on Chièvres Air Base or Daumerie Caserne, I'm pretty sure the host nation would do the same for us," Alcantara said. "So there's no reason why we can't help them in their time of need. There shouldn't be any barriers whatsoever once it comes to an emergency crisis."

SHAPE and Chièvres Community Calendar

**Protestant Women of the Chapel** have a fall kickoff Aug. 26, 9:30 a.m.-noon, in SHAPE Chapel. Meet other ladies for fellowship and Bible study. Meetings are every Thursday morning during the school year. Childcare is provided. Info: Kristiann Saunders, 065 84-1008.

**The U.S. Air Force Ball** is Oct. 9 at SHAPE Officers' Club. Cocktails are at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. "USAF in 2004 - Building on the Heritage of 1944." Info: Maj. Kurt Barry, DSN 423-4025. Tickets: Staff Sgt. Yvette Prioleau, DSN 423-3834.

**Certification course** - Benelux Training Support Center offers a MILES II Train-the-Trainer Certification Course Sept. 13-14. Grade requirement is E-4 (P) promotable, and above. Only 10 slots are available. Info: Miguel Lopez, DSN 361-5230.

**Bus schedule changes** - The Thursday schedule for the SHAPE/Chièvres shuttle bus has been changed to synchronize with PX and commissary hours. Check bus stops for the new schedule. The entire schedule is under review to ensure it meets customer needs. Send comments or recommendations to chet.coltharp@benelux.army.mil. Info: DSN 423-4514.

**BOSS** - Trip to Majorca, Spain, Aug. 25-Sept. 1, open to BOSS members and all U.S. ID card holders and includes flight and hotel accommodation.



Free bus shuttle from SHAPE to and from the airport. Info: DSN 361-5395.

**Youth Services** enrollment is on through Aug. 27. Sign up at Building 209 on SHAPE. Info: DSN 423-3874.

**Kennel construction** is completed on Chièvres Air Base. Open Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 2-4 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; and Sunday 2-4:30 p.m. Info: DSN 361-5436.

**Fitness center on Chièvres Air Base** has new hours, Monday-Friday 6 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**The Vet clinic** on Daumerie Caserne is closed through Aug. 22, reopens Aug. 23. No appointments available until the first week of September. Normal hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9-11:30 a.m., 1-4 p.m., Saturday clinic once a month. Info: DSN 361-5435/5700.

**Army Community Service** - "Take the Train," bus to train station leaves Aug. 27, 8:30 a.m., ACS Building 318, SHAPE, how to use the train system in Europe. Euro 18.50 for adults, Euro 9 for children 6-12 years. Must sign up. Info: DSN 423-4332.

**Rendezvous with the French language**, Aug. 31, 9:30 a.m., at Hotel Maisières, an overview where to learn French.

**National Night Out** - Neighborhoods throughout the 80th Area Support Group join forces Sept. 18 for the "21st Annual National Night Out," designed to heighten anti-terrorism, crime and drug prevention

awareness and generate participation in the Safe Neighborhood Awareness Program. The 80th ASG "Block Party Against Crime" is Sept. 18, 1-5 p.m., at the Community Activity Center on Chièvres Air Base. Events include a barbecue pit with refreshments sponsored by the commissary; information and demonstration booths from community organizations; fun activities for children; raffle give-away; appearances by McGruff the Crime Dog and Sparky the Fire Dog; music; and demonstrations by military working dogs and their handlers. SNAP is looking for community organizations that are interested in participating or having a booth. We are also looking for volunteers such as face painters. Info: Marcia DeVille, SNAP Program Coordinator, DSN 361-6143 or 068 27 6143 or email SNAP@benelux.army.mil.

**The Exceptional Family Member Program** seeks volunteers for the Benelux troupe of "Kids on the Block," an educational puppetry theater that helps children feel positive about themselves, accept individual differences and learn valuable personal skills. Info: DSN 423-7461.

**Entertainment Update** - *The One-act play festival* has performances Sept. 24-25, Oct. 1-2. *Knightly Dreams*, a new musical by Ann Andersen has performances Nov. 19-21. Auditions are Sept. 6-7, 4-6 p.m. and Sept. 8, 6-8 p.m. This is the big kids show with several major adult roles. *Love Letters* by

A. R. Gurney, a comedy/drama for one man and one woman. Performances are Dec. 9-11. *The Food Chain*, a risqué comedy by Nicky Silver. Performances will probably be the end of February or first weekend in March. Auditions by appointment Dec. 9-16. *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, Performances starting and finishing sometime March 10-25 March. Auditions by appointment, Dec. 9-16. *A Few Good Men* by Aaron Sorkin. Performances in late May and the first weekend in June. Auditions April 11-15. *The Entertainment Centre is always looking* for new stage managers, directors, assistant directors, class instructors, etc. If you know anyone who wants to direct, make sure they get in touch. *Salsa at the IC Club* with Cesar and Salina Monday Nights, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Sign Up at the Entertainment Centre. *Classes August-December* -Lunchtime Adult Playwrighting, noon, Tuesdays, Euro 20 per session; Lunchtime Adult Acting Class, noon, Thursdays, Euro 20 per session; Adult Acting Class, 6-7:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Euro 20 per session. Sign Up at the Entertainment Centre. *Children's Theater Classes* will be starting this fall. There will be two classes offered: Thursdays, 4-5 p.m., ages 5-9; and Fridays, 4-5:30, ages 9-15. Students over 15 may attend adult acting classes with a parent's permission. Classes will explore theater games, music and movement and improvisation. Price TBA. Info: Jacque Kilduff, DSN 423-4257.

Benelux Meteor Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy due (noon)	Print Date	Copy due (noon)	Print Date	Copy due (noon)	Print Date	Copy due (noon)	Print Date
Aug. 30	Sept. 10	Sept. 27	Oct. 8	Oct. 25	Nov. 5	Nov. 22	Dec. 3
Sept. 13	Sept. 24	Oct. 8	Oct. 22	Nov. 8	Nov. 19	Dec. 6	Dec. 17

About Us



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**Policy**

- We encourage letters to the editor, but they must be signed. We will consider withholding the name of the author upon request. Letters regarding an issue should contribute to informational interest.
- We reserve the right to edit all material for style, to fit available space, to resolve libel, safety or force protection issues and to correct grammar.
- Articles in plain text and separate photographic files may be submitted but publication depends upon the judgment of the editor. All submissions should be in electronic form as plain text. We cannot process information in documents such as PowerPoint, Excel or Acrobat.
- Event announcements must use civilian dates and times. Spell out acronyms and include a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. To save space, we cannot reproduce prepared flyers in the *Meteor*.

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- Neither the *Benelux Meteor* staff nor other public affairs personnel can accept advertising requests.
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**Deadline**  
Copy and photographs are due by noon 10 calendar days before publication date.

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# A profound loss



The City of Ath held a funeral service Aug. 4 for five firemen, a police officer, and an Electrabel employee who perished July 30 in a gas main explosion in Ghislenghien, Belgium. The sanctuary was filled to capacity, and many more hundreds who couldn't fit inside L'église Saint-Julien lined the street to witness the somber procession and watch the service on a large video screen. Other funeral services were held privately. The seven people honored in the funeral Mass arrived at the industrial zone July 30 to investigate and secure the area and they were killed when the escaping gas violently ignited into a roaring tower of flame. Twenty were killed and over 120 were injured. Belgium declared Aug. 4 a day of mourning throughout the country.



PHOTOS: F. Neil Neeley

